

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: REACTION TO VISIT TO PIRAEUS BY USS JOSEPHUS DANIELS

1. SUMMARY. THE USS JOSEPHUS DANIELS BEGAN A FOUR DAY VISIT TO PIRAEUS AUG 9, AND DEPARTED THE MORNING OF AUG 13, WITHOUT INCIDENT. PRESS REACTION TO THE VISIT WAS LIGHT AND RELATIVELY RESTRAINED. NO INCIDENTS WERE REPORTED INVOLVING CREW MEMBERS ON SHORE LEAVE. AN ANTI-NATO, ANTI-US PROTEST MEETING WAS HELD IN PIRAEUS ON THE EVENING OF AUG 12, BUT NOT DIRECTED AT THE DANIELS, AND AN ATTEMPT BY A SMALL MAOIST GROUP TO DIVERT IT TOWARD THE DANIELS FIZZLED PEACEFULLY WHEN CONFRONTED BY WELL-ORGANIZED MUNICIPAL POLICE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FIRST PRESS REPORTS ABOUT THE DANIELS APPEARED ON AUG 11. RIZOSPATIS (COMMUNIST PARTY EXTERIORN KKE-EXTERIOR) CARRIED A FRONT PAGE ARTICLE WITH A DOCKSIDE
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PICTURE OF DANIELS STATING THAT SHIP'S PRESENCE IN

PIRAEUS WAS CONNECTED SOMEHOW WITH GREEK-TURKISH TENSIONS IN THE AEGEAN. THE ARTICLE NOTED THAT CREW MEMBERS ON LIBERTY WORE CIVILIAN CLOTHES (AS WAS THE CASE). ELEFTHEROTYPIA (LEFT CENTER, ANTI-US) COMPLAINED THAT DANIELS DID NOT DISPLAY GREEK FLAG. (US NAVY SHIPS DO NOT CUSTOMARILY FLY THE FLAG OF HOST COUNTRY.) OTHER PAPERS THAT DAY CARRIED ONLY BRIEF NOTES ON SHIPS ARRIVAL.

3. PRESS COVERAGE ON AUG 12 WAS SOMEWHAT FULLER. RIZOSPATIS REPORTED DANIELS PRESENCE HAD PROVOKED INDIGNATION AMONG PEOPLE OF PIRAEUS AND QUOTED LONG STATEMENTS BY LABOR ORGAN OF KKE-EXTERIOR AND BY THE PANHELLENIC COMMITTEE AGAINST FOREIGN BASES CONDEMNING THE VISIT. AVGHI (COMMUNIST PARTY OF INTERIOR) ALSO REPORTED PROTESTS BY THE PEOPLE OF PIRAEUS AND NOTED THAT DANIELS CARRIES MISSILES. THE AVGHI ARTICLE ALSO REFERRED TO THE PRESENCE OF OTHER SIXTH FLEET VESSELS AT SOUDA BAY DURING THE WEEK. ATHINAIKI (LEFT CENTER, PRO-PASOK QUESTIONED WHETHER LACK OF GREEK FLAG ABOARD THE DANIELS WAS MERELY ABSENTMINDEDNESS OR A DEMONSTRATION OF HATRED FOR HELLENISM. OTHER PAPERS CARRIED BRIEF REPORTS OF DANIELS PRESENCE, MOST COMMENTING THAT LIBERTY PARTIES WORE CIVILIAN CLOTHES. SEVERAL INCLUDED DOCKSIDE PICTURES.

4. DURING THE EVENING OF AUG 12 A MEETING ORGANIZED BY STUDENT ASSN OF PIRAEUS, TO PROTEST AGAINST NATO AND US FOREIGNPOLICY, WAS HELD IN EXHIBITION HALL OF THE PIRAEUS MUNICIPAL BLDG, APPROX ONE AND A HALF MILES FROM THE DANIELS MOORING. PIRAEUS POLICE OFFICIALS INFORM US THAT A GROUP OF 350-400 SUPPORTERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST MOVEMENT OF GREECE (EKKE), A MAOIST GROUP, GATHERED OUTSIDE THE BUILDING. AS THE MEETING BROKE UP, THEY BEGAN SHOUTING FOR A PROTEST MARCH TO THE DANIELS MOORING. A PORTION OF THE CROWD FROM THE MAOIST GROUP, THE ORIGINAL PROTEST MEETING AND COFFEE DRINKERS IN THE ADJOINING SQUARE BEGAN MOVING DOWN AN AVENUE LEADING TO THE HARBOR. THEY WERE MET AT THE FIRST INTERSECTION BY POLICE CHIEF AND PUBLIC PROSECUTOR OF PIRAEUS WHO ADVISED THEM THEIR MARCH WAS ILLEGAL. THE CROWD THEN DISPERSED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUIETLY AS MUNICIPAL POLICE BEGAN MOVING INTO THENEXT INTERSECTION. (THIS ACCOUNT ALSO AGREED WITH INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM HARBOR SECURITY AUTHORITIES.) THE CROWD WAS NEVER WITHIN ONE MILE OF THE DANIELS AND WAS NOT VISIBLE FROM THE DANIELS OR FROM ELSEWHERE IN THE HARBOR.

5. MOST OF TODAY'S (AUG 13) MORNING PAPERS REPORT THE PROTEST MEETING AND THE DEPARTURE OF THE DANIELS, IN THE

HEADLINE OF A SHORT ARTICLE, CONNECTS THE DEMONSTRATION
WITH THE DANIELS VISIT.

6. AVGHI'S REFERENCE ON AUG 12 (ABOVE) TO SIXTH
FLEET SHIPS AT SOUDA WAS ONE OF SEVERAL APPEARING IN
AVGHI, RIZOSPASTIS AND ATHINAIKI. LAST WEEK THE
PRESENCE OF THE NIMITZ TASK FORCE IN THE SOUDA BAY AREA
FOR A TRAINING EXERCISE OFFSHORE HAD ALSO BEEN REPORTED
IN A FEW PAPERS, WITHOUT, HOWEVER, IDENTIFICATION OF THE
NIMITZ. THE ARTICLES REPORTED PROTESTS IN CHANIA
CONCERNING THE COMING AND GOING OF US NAVAL VESSELS, BUT
ONLY ATHINAIKI MENTIONED AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER, WHICH, IT
SAID, COULD NOT BE IDENTIFIED BECAUSE OF ITS DISTANCE FROM
THE SHORE. (PRO-GOVT VRADYNI ON AUG 6 WAS THE
ONLY PAPER TO PICK UP THE REPORTED REMARKS OF GENERAL HAIG
AT THE SIXTH FLEET CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY THAT THE
NUCLEAR-POWERED NIMITZ HAD REPLACED THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER
SARATOGA IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.)
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